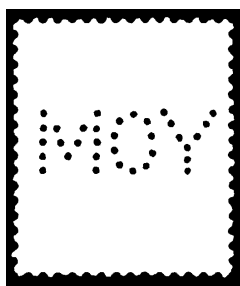


## THOMAS MOY - Coal Merchant and Much, Much More!

Roy Gault

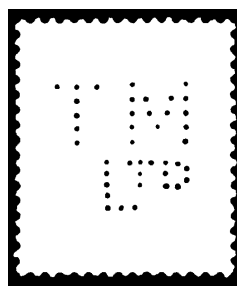
Way back in April 1994 the user of the full-name Perfin “MOY” (M4340.01) was positively identified by **Gary Shayler** as having been used by “*Thomas Moy Ltd*”, Coal, Coke & General Merchants, Lowestoft. The surname Moy is unusual, but a quick look through the ‘*Perfin Society Bulletin - 50 years*’ CD (an invaluable tool) shows the name cropped up as early as 1958. There were also two further brief mentions in 1972 and 1974, so now is probably a good time to pull everything together and make sense of these four isolated references.

1890-1935



M4340.01

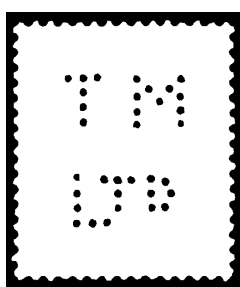
1935-1941



T3310.02

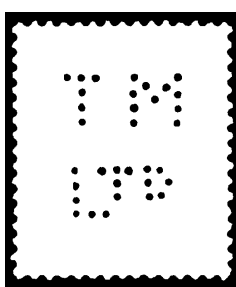
The earliest Bulletin reference was to “TM/L<sup>td</sup>” (T3310.02), which we now know was in use 1935-1941. This was a Sloper single headed die, believed destroyed in the “Blitz” on Sloper’s premises in May 1941.

1941-1945



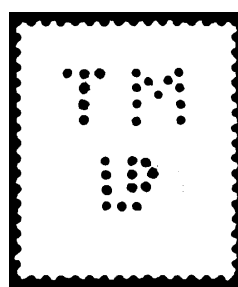
T3310.01a

1945-1955



T3310.01M

1955-1971

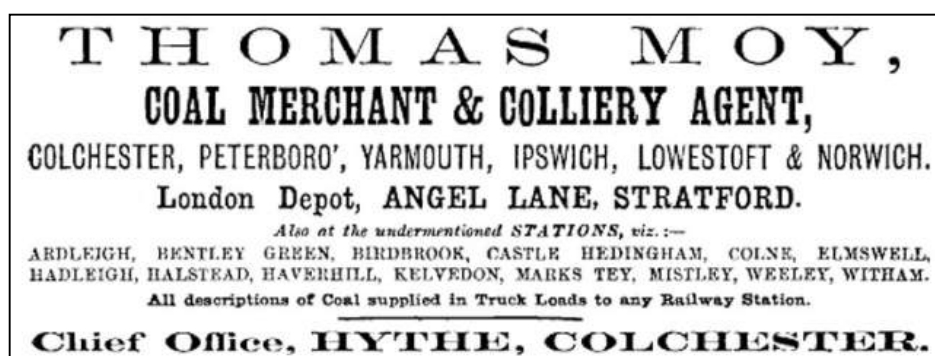


T3300.01M

Unusually, it had an immediate ‘regular die’ replacement in the shape of “TM/L<sup>td</sup>” (T3310.01a), which was itself replaced in the mid 1940’s by a somewhat similar “TM/L<sup>td</sup>” (T3310.01M), a Sloper multi-headed die, **12x1**. Their final phase of Perfin use was with another Sloper **12x1** multi-headed die “TM/L<sup>d</sup>” (T3300.01M). The earliest known date on a Thomas Moy Perfin is 20<sup>th</sup> Sep 1894, and the latest March

1971. But what can we find out about both the company and the man who created it? Of course, the internet is a good place to start - directory references, census returns, etc!

Thomas Moy was born in Colchester, Essex, around 1831, and although I couldn't be sure I had found the right male in the 1841 census, I'm confident I found him in the 1851 census as a Printer's Apprentice in Colchester. By 1861, however, he had become a Coal Merchant, living in Hythe St, Colchester. This was to be the trade with which he would make his fame and fortune! Even in the 1861 census he was wealthy enough to employ two servants to look after him, his wife Jane, and their young son Charles Thomas.



The 1871 census records him as living at Hythe Hill House, having doubled the number of servants to look after him, his wife, and three children, although he is still described as a Coal Merchant. However, grander things are revealed in the 1881 census where we find him living in Stanway Hall (now a Zoo!), and described as a 'Merchant'. The 1891 census records him as a Merchant and Magistrate (a JP).

By the late 1880's he is well established, the company being described in various trade directories as Coal, Coke & Lime Merchants, Coal & Corn Factors and even Ship Owners - his sea going colliers carried coal down the east coast to London.

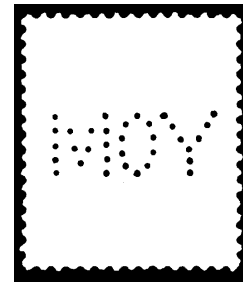
His main business, perhaps even worthy of being called an empire, was as a Coal Merchant, organising the procurement and delivery of coal to households throughout Essex, and neighbouring Norfolk and Suffolk.

There are other references to the man, for example he was Mayor of Colchester in 1878, and even a faded picture of him exists carrying out one of his ceremonial duties.

But perhaps the most unusual reference is the story of his firm's involvement in the transportation of 1,500,000 half-bricks, and later the Lantern itself, for the lighthouse built at Southwold in 1890.



c1900



M4340.02

However, there is one final twist that must be told!

There is another full-name “MOY” die (M4340.02) that we know of dating to c1900, in which the “O” is much more pointed, and with a part cancel of ‘...orough’. A little bit of research has established that Thomas Moy set up a Wagon Works in Peterborough sometime before 1890, to build and repair Railway Wagons for his own Coal business, other Railway Companies, and to hire them out for other uses. Thus the postmark must have originally read *Peterborough*. The Railway Works changed ownership in 1926, and again in 1931, but continued to operate under the name of Moy’s Wagon Co Ltd until the mid 1960’s.



The company took on Limited Liability in July 1891, by which time Thomas was around 60 years old. Thomas Moy died in 1910, aged 78.